



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL ORGANISATIONS  
OF FISHING ENTERPRISES IN THE EU

**Statement for ICCAT's 28<sup>TH</sup> regular meeting of the Commission**

**PANEL 2**

*Cairo, Egypt, November 13<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>*

**North Atlantic Albacore Tuna**

**Recital:**

- Noting the outcomes of the Report of the 2023 ICCAT North Atlantic Albacore Stock Assessment Meeting (including MSE) which indicated that the probability of the stock currently being in the green area of the Kobe plot is 99.6%;
- Considering the adoption of Recommendation 21-04, replacing Recommendations 16-06 and 17-04 as amended on conservation and management measures for North Atlantic Albacore;
- Noting that Article 14 (a) of Recommendation 21-04 provides for new analyses to be carried out to test other HCRs supporting the management objectives associated with a wider range of control parameters than that currently explored for fishing mortality and biomass values;
- According to the SCRS 2022 report<sup>1</sup>, it would be possible to increase the F-target value from 0.8 to 0.9 without compromising the sustainability objective for this stock. Table 17.23.1 of this report states that by only changing the F-target value to 0.9, the probability of being in the green quadrant of the Kobe diagram would be 61.65%;
- Observing that the selected HCR in 2017 by Recommendation 17-04 on a provisional basis for the period 2018-2020, led to the setting of a TAC lower than the Maximum Sustainable Yield, since the fishing mortality applied in 2018 represented only 62% of the fishing mortality associated with the MSY, and the catches in 2021 were well below the objectives of MSY;
- Recalling that ICCAT Recommendation 15-07 provides that the management strategy evaluation (MSE) is an inclusive, interactive and iterative process used to evaluate, *inter alia*, the effectiveness of harvest control rules and reference points in meeting management objectives, including the risk of not meeting those objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.iccat.int/Documents/BienRep/REP\\_FR\\_22-23-I-2.pdf](https://www.iccat.int/Documents/BienRep/REP_FR_22-23-I-2.pdf)

### Europêche recommendation:

Noting that no exceptional circumstances have been detected, Europêche recommends applying the management strategy (MS) to the current biomass estimate to set the next TAC for the 2024-2026 period. The recommended TAC obtained by applying the MS is 47 251 t, which represents a 25% increase of the previous TAC, with respect to the Recommendation 21-04.

However, capping the TAC with a fishing mortality value of  $F=0.8$  results in an excess of precaution. Europêche advocates for the purposes of the management strategy for North Atlantic albacore, the reference point for the F-target value be re-evaluated from 0.8 to 0.9. **In this context, the TAC for the 2024-2026 period should be set by applying this F-target value of 0.9.**

Finally, the application of the management strategy being conditional on the efforts of the CPCs to respect their fishing possibilities, Europêche is strongly opposed to open discussions on the distribution key between the contracting parties, nor of the distribution ratio between CPCs holding allocated TAC and those limited to a catch limits.